

a critical prescription drug benefit plan for Missouri senior citizens. As always, Paula Carter never let her own physical limitations get in the way of her commitment to helping those less fortunate.

So on behalf of the Missouri delegation of the U.S. House of Representatives, I want to offer our deepest sympathies and condolences to the family of Senator Paula Carter. She will be greatly missed, both in our state capital and in her beloved City of St. Louis, but her legislative legacy and accomplishments will endure in the thousands of people she touched through her leadership and determination.

**TALIBAN HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES
NOT COMPARABLE TO CIVILIAN
DEATHS RESULTING FROM U.S.
BOMBING**

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2001

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member wishes to commend to his colleagues the October 27, 2001, editorial from the Omaha World-Herald entitled "Taliban Atrocities."

Despite its great efforts to prevent civilian deaths in Afghanistan, the U.S. will inadvertently kill some civilians as it continues its bombings against Taliban-held areas. The civilian deaths which have already occurred (and those which likely will occur) certainly and very obviously are not part of a concerted scheme to kill the Afghan people. They are (and will be) an unfortunate consequence of

the war on terrorism and those who continue to harbor terrorists. Unfortunately, civilian deaths simply are a part of any war.

Contrast that fact with the conditions, as outlined in the editorial, which the Taliban has inflicted upon the Afghan people.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical that the U.S. win not only the war on terrorism but also the media war to uncover the horrific human rights abuses systematically implemented by the Taliban against the Afghan people.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, Saturday, October 27, 2001]

TALIBAN ATROCITIES

(By John Cottschalk)

The Taliban's ambassador to Pakistan sounded a hypocritical note when he claimed that the United States is carrying out genocide against the Afghan people.

On the contrary, the United States has gone to great lengths to minimize civilian casualties. Although accidental bombings of residential structures have occurred, military analyst William Arkin noted in The Washington Post that for U.S. military planners, "avoidance of civilian casualties has become institutionalized even to the point of rejecting important targets if there is a high probability of civilian harm."

The Taliban's claim of the moral high ground is further undermined by the fact that it is using Afghan civilians as human shields by relocating its military hardware into schools and mosques.

It is especially brazen of the Taliban to pose as a champion of human rights, considering the horrors it has imposed on the Afghan people in recent years. Here are only a few incidents in the lengthy inventory of human rights abuses by the Taliban:

In January of this year, the organization Human Rights Watch reports, the Taliban

conducted a summary execution of 300 civilian adult males after it retook the town of Yorkaolang.

In September 2000, Taliban forces used bombs, shells and cluster munitions indiscriminately against residential areas in the town of Taloqan and surrounding villages before capturing the area, according to statements by refugees.

In May 2000, Taliban forces summarily executed at least 200 prisoners near a mountain pass northwest of the town of Pul-i Khumri.

In August 1998, the Taliban captured Mazar-i Sharif, a strategic city in northern Afghanistan. Here is how Human Rights Watch described the Taliban's subsequent actions:

"Within the first few hours of seizing control of the city, Taliban troops killed scores of civilians in indiscriminate attacks, shooting noncombatants and suspected combatants alike in residential areas, city streets and markets. Witnesses described it as a 'killing frenzy' as the advancing forces shot at 'anything that moved.'"

Anti-Taliban guerrilla groups, including fighters for the Northern Alliance now supported by the United States, by no means have a spotless human rights record either. Over the past decade, such forces have attacked residential areas with artillery fire and carried out summary executions of Taliban soldiers and suspected supporters, according to Human Rights Watch.

Such considerations indicate the difficulties that lie ahead in erecting a stable, democratic government in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban era.

As for the Taliban, it stands damned by its own disreputable actions. In light of its appalling record, it has no moral standing to lecture the United States about respect for human life and protection of innocent civilians.